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PLAN TO PUT VOLGA-DON CANAL IN OPERATION ON 1 MAY 1952

[Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.]

The builders of the Tsimlyanskaya GES have pledged to make the first aggregate of the GES ready for operation on 10 April, the second on 30 April, and the third and last on 15 May.(1) The builders of the Volga-Don Canal are working to make the canal ready for exploitation on 1 May 1952.(2)

The idea of connecting the Volga and Don rivers originated in the 16th century. Since then, more than 30 projects have been prepared for the construction of the canal. The first attempt to build it took place in 1598 by order of Turkey's Sultan Selim II. In 1700, during the reign of the Russian Tsar Peter the Great, a canal was built connecting the rivers through their northern tributaries (Don-Ivanovskoye Lake-Shat-Upa-Volga). During the 7 years of its construction, 23 locks and other structures were built. The canal was in operation for some time, but was abandoned after 300 ships had passed through. Construction of the present canal, which started before World War II, had to be discontinued during the war. It was started again in 1948.(3)

On 1 December 1951, the last cubic meters of earth were placed to complete the 12.8-kilometer-long earthen sector of the Tsimlyanskaya Dam.(4) Having completed their job, some of the personnel who had operated the suction dredges while building up the dam were preparing to leave for the Kuybyshev GES construction site at the end of 1951.(5)

From 18 to 27 January (6) nine out of ten bottom openings in the concrete spillway were closed and the Tsimlyanskiy Reservoir began to fill up with water.(7) By 10 February, the water in the dammed Don River rose 17 meters at the deepest point.(8)

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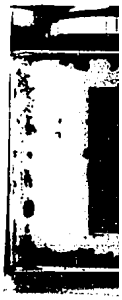

The builders have pledged to complete general construction work on 15 April. They plan to concrete the GES structure, the fish elevator, and the 500-meter-long and 40-meter-high concrete spillway by 14 March.(1) The spillway, which is built on marl and sand, is reinforced with steel sheet piling driven deeply into the solid strata under the sand. The upper ends of the piling are imbedded in the concrete base of the spillway.(9)

The double wing gates, which weigh 200 tons, have been installed at the Don River end of the Volga-Don Canal.(10) On 1 February as scheduled, the Karpovskaya Pumping Station started pumping water from the Don River into the Karpovskiy Reservoir.(11) The latter is formed by a dam across the valley of the Karpovka River. The dam is parallel to the Volga and 6 kilometers away from it.(12) The pumping station is of a unique design and was created by Engineer Ivantsov. It can be used either for pumping water into the reservoir, or as a spillway to dump surplus water from the reservoir into the Don.(11)

As soon as the water level in the Karpovskiy Reservoir reaches the suction end of the Marinovskaya Pumping Station, which is expected in March, the latter will be put into operation. The water which it will lift further into the canal will subsequently flow into the Bereslavskiy Reservoir by gravity.(2)

The Varvarovskaya Pumping Station, which is atop the dam dividing the Bereslavskiy and Varvarovskiy reservoirs and can be used for pumping water either way (13), is scheduled to be in operation by mid-April. From the Varvarovskiy Reservoir the water will flow into the canal by gravity toward the Volga River.

Filling the entire system with water will require the pumping of 320 million cubic meters of water, which will be distributed along the entire length of the canal by all three pumping stations. The Karpovskaya Station will pump over 300 million cubic meters of water, the Marinovskaya Station 200 million, and the Varvarovskaya Station 120 million.(2) The recently completed 110,000-volt power transmission line is the source of power for the electric motors of all three pumping stations.(14) The new river port in Kalach-on-Don, which has been under construction for some time, is expected to be completed by spring 1952. It has two piers to handle freight, one pier for passenger service, a passenger station building, warehouses, and other structures.(15) The city of Kalach-on-Don is located on low terrain in the zone of the Tsimlyanskiy Reservoir. It will be protected against flooding by a dam which was under construction in August 1951 and will be completed before the Tsimlyanskiy Reservoir is filled up. Verkhne-Kurmoyarskaya Stanitsa was moved 70 kilometers to Kruglyakov village, which has become the new center of Voroshilovskiy Rayon. Nizhne-Chirskaya Stanitsa was moved to the point of the confluence of the Chir and Don rivers. The remaining 580 kolkhoz families were to be evacuated from the Tsimlyanskiy Reservoir zone in October 1951.(16)

It is planned to plant 4 million trees and bushes along the Volga-Don Canal.(17) Taking advantage of the unusually mild weather in the region of the lower Volga, 10-12 year old elms and poplars were being planted along the canal in Chapurniki village in January 1952, making the village unrecognizable.(18)

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9. Leninskoye Znamya, 25 Sep 51
10. Sovetskaya Litva, 18 Dec 51
11. Izvestiya, 2 Feb 52
12. Moskovskiy Komsomolets, 5 Feb 52
13. Baku, Bakinskiy Rabochiy, 18 Nov 51
14. Moskovskaya Pravda, 25 Dec 51
15. Kishinev, Sovetskaya Moldaviya, 9 Dec 51
16. Leninskoye Znamya, 17 Aug 51
17. Moscow, Bloknot Agitatora, No 4, Feb 52
18. Izvestiya, 16 Jan 52

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